

REMARKS

In the Official Action of June 30, 2004, the Examiner required restriction of the claims in the present application to one of three distinct inventions. As indicated by the Examiner, the inventions are as follows:

- I. Claims 1-3, drawn to an object recognition method that switches between a plurality of databases, classified in class 382, subclass 181 (image analysis/pattern recognition).
- II. Claims 4-9 and 11-25, drawn to an object recognition system that uses feature vectors and detects distance, classified in class 382, subclass 106 (image analysis/range or distance measuring).
- III. Claim 10, drawn to a plurality of databases, classified in class 707, subclass 103R (Data processing/Object-oriented database structure).

Further, the Examiner asserts that inventions I, II, and III are related as combination and subcombination. As for claim 24 (Group II), the Examiner asserts that it does not require switching between a plurality of databases as required by claim 1 (Group I), nor does it require the particulars of the plurality of databases as described in claim 10 (Group III). The Examiner also asserts that the subcombination of Group I has separate utility such as pattern recognition and Group II has separate utility such as data management using a plurality of databases.

In response, Applicants have elected the invention categorized as Group II, to which claims 4-9 and 11-25, are drawn. Additionally, Applicants traverse the restriction requirement.

Initially, Applicants note that the Examiner classified at least Groups I and II, in related subclasses of class 382. Also, Applicants submit that both Groups I and II include substantially similar subject matter recitations. For example, Groups I and II both include, inter alia, focusing

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the range of searching. Thus, no substantial burden is placed on the Examiner in examining Group I and Group II together, since they are classified in the same class and contain substantially, similar recitations. Accordingly, at least Group I should be examined with elected Group II.

Further, Applicants note that Group II (e.g., claim 24) and Group III (claim 10) both relate to the following: a plurality of databases, a plurality of cameras, registering feature vectors obtained by multiplying image data acquired by taking pictures of said plurality of objects, and a feature extraction matrix to extract features of a predetermined of a predetermined object. Accordingly, since Groups II and III both have numerous features which are substantially similar, a search for the features of Group II would also include a search for the features of Group III. Thus, Applicants submit that no serious burden would be placed on the Examiner in Examining Group III together with at least elected Group II.

Additionally, the restriction requirement as set forth by the Examiner omits one of the two criteria for a proper restriction requirement. As set forth in MPEP § 803, an appropriate explanation must be set forth by the Examiner as to the existence of a serious burden if the restriction requirement were not required. By virtue of Examiner's requirement, and since the claims of the groups are related, it is submitted that there is no serious burden on the Examiner in examining Groups I, II, and III together. Furthermore, given the nature of the claims, the Examiner has provided no explanation or reasoning as to why the search for Group I, Group II , and Group III are substantially different and do not include the same class and subclasses, especially since all three groups of claims are directed towards, inter alia, a plurality of databases associated with a plurality of cameras.

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Moreover, as required, the Examiner must provide reasons and/or examples to support conclusions, which was not done by the Examiner with respect to the serious burden issue. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the restriction requirement in the present application.

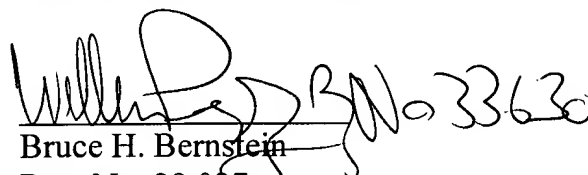
For all of the above reasons, it is respectfully submitted that the Examiner's restriction requirement is inappropriate and withdrawal of the above is respectfully requested, together with an action on the merits of all of the claims pending herein.

Accordingly, the Examiner's restriction requirement is believed to be improper and has been traversed for the reasons as set forth above. Nevertheless, in order to be fully responsive, Applicants have elected with traverse, the invention defined as Group II, comprising claims 4-9 and 11-25, in the event that the Examiner chooses not to reconsider and withdraw the restriction requirement.

Should the Examiner have any questions or comments regarding this paper or the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the below listed telephone number.

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